

~~SECRET/NOFORN~~NIO/EUROPE
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Papandreou's last-minute withdrawal of support for Karamanlis' reelection as President remains the focus of attention in Greece. The results of the first round of Parliamentary balloting shed no light on whether Papandreou will garner the 180 votes necessary to elect his hand-picked candidate Sartzetakis on the third round. There are reports, however, that half a dozen Pasok deputies are considering breaking with the party, a move which would doom Sartzetakis and force the holding of Parliamentary elections in early May. Papandreou apparently also senses that his move against Karamanlis has not been popular: He is trying to portray himself as a moderate at heart and has withdrawn one constitutional amendment that would have greatly reduced the powers of the Presidency. Mitsotakis' New Democracy party is naturally campaigning hard against Sartzetakis and trying to force the holding of early elections. It has called for a rally in Athens on March 29th, the date of the final round of voting in Parliament on Sartzetakis. If Pasok appears to behave highhandedly in the coming days, tensions will run high and there may be violence at the New Democracy rally. Such a turn of events might encourage some officers in the military and the gendarmerie, who are already perturbed by Papandreou's policies, to begin active coup plotting.